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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.





THE FUNCTION OF GREAT MEN.

JAMES ABRAM GARFIELD,

NOV. 19, 1831—SEPT. 19, 1881.

“Wem die heiligen Todten gleichgultig sind, dem werden es
Lebendiger auch.”—*Richter*.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,

WASHINGTON, D. C.

Sept. 25th.

By Rev. J. E. RANKIN, D. D.



WASHINGTON, D. C.
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THE FUNCTION OF GREAT MEN.

ISAIAH III: 1, 2 AND 3.—“For, behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah, the mighty man, the man of war, the honorable man, the counsellor, and the eloquent orator.”

There is no function of society more important, more vital, than the choice of rulers; the selection of a nation's great men! It is a supreme, a sacred act. When exercised by a great, free people, it is an anointing holier than that of a king's. It is the utterance of a voice which is the voice of God! The Psalmist says, “Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But, God is the Judge. He putteth down one, and setteth up another.” And there is no holier transaction, in which a nation ever engages, than that by which, through her constitutional forms, she consults God's oracles; appeals to Him, as to the men whom He would have to exercise authority over her. Says Whittier, in his poem, “The Eve of Election,”

“Around I see the powers that be;
I stand by Empire's primal springs;
I princes meet, in every street,
And hear the tread of uncrowned kings.

“No jest is this! one cast amiss
May blast the hope of Freedom's year.
O take me where are hearts of pray'r,
And foreheads bowed in rev'rent fear!

“ So shall our voice of sov'reign choice
 Swell the deep bass of duty done ;
 And strike the key of time to be :
 When God and man shall speak as one !”

Thus, under God's guidance, this nation furnishes herself with her great men ; the men who mould her institutions, who make her laws, who preside over her destinies ; who stamp their genius upon what is imperishable in her structure. What foreigner thinks of this Republic, without thinking of Washington, of Lincoln, of Grant ? What citizen, without remembering the names of Jefferson and Jackson, and Webster and Sumner ? And how largely we are as a nation what these men and men like them have helped to make us !

THE FUNCTION OF GREAT MEN IN THE LIFE OF THE
 NATION.

This is the subject which I shall discuss this morning.

Disorganizers of society look upon great men as in some sense usurpers of other men's rights ; as having crowded their way up to stations of prominence and power, by jostling aside their betters. When the nihilist prepares his hand-grenade or his infernal machine ; when the assassin points his revolver at the ruler of the people, it is with this construction. They do not reflect that preparation for such high positions is of God himself ; that God fits men for such places, and calls them by name as He did Cyrus of old ; that in some true sense they are God's gifts ! They see in rulers only common men, accidentally great ; tricked out with stolen titles ; grown great, like the big fishes of the sea, by eating up the little ones. This is the way Brutus talked to himself when he thought to get rid of Cæsar. And this is the way Cassius talked to him :

“ Brutus and Cæsar ! What should be in that Cæsar ?
 Why should that name be sounded more than yours ?
 Write them together : yours is as fair a name ;
 Sound them : it doth become the mouth as well ;
 Weigh them : it is as heavy ; conjure with them :
 Brutus will start a spirit as soon as Cæsar.”

Irreverence for rulers is one of the perils of a Republic. Goldsmith says :

“ Princes and lords may flourish or may fade,
 A breath can make them, as a breath has made ;
 But a bold peasantry their country’s pride,
 When once destroyed, can never be supplied.”

But we may go too far in this direction. It is all true that a breath can give dignity and station ; a breath can make Presidents and Senators and Judges ; a breath may call a Cincinnatus from the plough, a Washington from the peaceful shadows of Mt. Vernon ; a Jefferson from Monticello ; a Webster from Marshfield. But the breath that calls them cannot make them ; sometimes calls them in vain ; cannot make their place good, when they are summoned from the earth. The bold peasantry, of which Goldsmith speaks, need true princes and lords ; need great men, men who can think, and speak, and execute ; men who can legislate and organize and command. How peaceful has been the heart of this great nation in the thought that since March 4th, 1881, there has been a genuine, typical American in the Presidential chair ; a man such as only our free institutions could make ; their ripest fruitage, their choicest bloom ! Here, at length, was a statesman who, from his own experience, knew all the aspects and vicissitudes of American life ; had touched it in all points of his career ; who had been rounded out and perfected by it. “ Upon this arm,” said the nation, “ I can lean. This head, this heart, I can trust.”

No man rejoiced more in the election of James Abram Garfield to the Presidential chair than myself. No man condemns the "deep damnation of his taking off" more than I. And yet, there is something grander in the man, as the product of our free institutions; as the growth of that widow's son, of that log cabin; of that common school, academy and college; of those conditions of early poverty and later self-help, than in the niche into which he was elevated by the enthusiasm of the American people. The American people did not make him great. Never was a more fitting selection. And, yet, had the selection never been made, the man had been the same. It was glorious, for once, to feel that a candidate had been fixed upon, not because he could be elected, but because he was so well furnished to fill and adorn the place. But now we may well ask whether God did not give him this elevation, less because it was the legitimate fruit of his life and the crown of his character, than to give emphasis to that life and that character; we may well ask, whether he was not called to pass through this ordeal of fire, that the people might love him better, and take his name and his memory more into their heart of hearts forever.

It is a narrow-view of the function of great men in the life of a nation, to confine it to the places of power which they occupy; to the great measures they originate and carry safely through. As an educating and moulding influence; as giving direction to the ambitions of those who come after them; it is more by what they are, than by what they do, that they enter into the nation's life; that future generations beat with their pulse. The places to which they are exalted, and the deeds which they achieve, give them a suitable setting; call attention to

what they are ; to the methods by which they come—

“ To mould a mighty state’s decrees,
And shape the whisper of the throne.”

It is not alone what Washington did which has entered into the life of this nation. It is what he was. It is how he came to be what he was. Had James Abram Garfield never been elected President of these United States, the nation would have experienced a great loss in the moral forces which would have failed of entering into her life. She would have greatly wronged herself and all her future. He would have been just the same man in the House, in the Senate, but equal emphasis would not have been given to the fact. When during the last political campaign, it seemed for a moment uncertain what would be the result—our candidate had such fiery ordeals to pass, such gauntlets to run—I said to myself, “Well, even if he fail, it will be an incalculable blessing to the coming generations to have so minutely studied his character and career.” And so, to-day, all that his few months of Presidential service, all that the execrable deed of the assassin, all that his eighty days of heroic suffering, in the eye of the whole nation, nay, of the whole world, have done, is to underscore the great-hearted noble man he was. He is ours now, beyond the touch of time. We knew him to be great in all intellectual qualities ; we knew how easily he was chief, wherever he came into comparison with men, in outward activities. This proves how great he was ; how brave, how affectionate, how filial, how fearless, when confronting the great realities of the other life.

The highest product of American national life, is neither patrician, nor plebeian. It blends and unites

them both. It has the patrician culture, with the plebean heart. Washington stands at the head of one type; Lincoln at the head of the other. Do we err, when we intimate that Garfield illustrates them both? A plebeian, a common man, in all his sympathies; a patrician in the quality of his mind and the extent of his culture! Who ever heard the ringing words of his eloquence; saw the speaking man, so self-poised, so self-possessed, as he minted new truth, or gave old truth his own image and superscription; ever felt the aptness of his utterance, the vigor and grasp of his thought, saw

“ How thought leapt out to wed with thought,
Ere thought could wed itself with speech,”

without recognizing in him the best fruits of the best culture of the schools? without seeing that this man was heir to the best thinking of the ages? And, yet, who ever felt the grasp of his hand, or looked into his kindly eyes, or noted his warm ways of friendship, his familiar speech to the comrade of the school, of the field, or the forum, without taking him right to his heart, as a brother-man; a brother-man of brother-men?

The desire to become one of a nation's great men; to sit in the seat of Senators and Judges; to command her armies, to shape her counsels; to preside over her destinies; is one of the highest ambitions which a patriot can cherish. In all truly great men, it lies among the initial elements of their nature. It is the earnest and prophecy of what shall be. It is something world-wide in its difference from an ambition to be lifted up into place, for its own sake; that ambition which corrodes, and corrupts, and defiles a man. It comes to a man in his boyhood. Impressions are made upon him, by reading the lives of

great men who have gone before. Longings move within him which he durst not breathe ; germs begin to spring, and strengthen, and grow with his growth.

President Garfield has left this among his choice things : "From the genius of our Government the pathway to honorable distinction lies open to all. No post of honor is so high but the poorest boy may hope to reach it. It is the pride of every American, that many cherished names, at whose mention our hearts beat with a quicker bound, were worn by the sons of poverty, who conquered obscurity, and became fixed stars in our firmament." There were cherished names which made the heart of this boy Garfield ; this barefoot boy in the public school of Orange ; this bell-ringer in the academy at Hiram ; this student and teacher in the college ; there were cherished names which made the heart of this boy beat with a quicker bound ; as his name will henceforth quicken the heart-beat of American boys in all future generations. The fixed stars in our firmament of national life, never dim and never die. And henceforth he himself is one of them.

It is not because we love the ignoble beginnings of many of our eminent men, that we so often refer to them ; it is because, for our children's sake, we love to recount the conquests which these men have made ; how they grew to the greatness which awaited them. In themselves considered, poverty and an humble birth are no ground of claim to distinction. Says the great dramatist : "Some are born great, and some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them." In another sense than the poet means, those who achieve greatness, were born great. And their greatness is only their filling out of the outline of God's purpose in creating them. It

is the record of this achievement that we love to contemplate and recount to our children ; how these boys, having the germs of greatness within them, with a sublime patience, took up life's burdens ; met life's rebuffs ; adjusted themselves to life's complications ; were wrought upon by life's surroundings ; and crowded their diligent way forward until they stood alone, and the people recognized them, and crowned them great. In such a country as ours, every boy that does this will repeat himself a hundred fold, to the end of time.

Do not understand me that the boy Garfield had only secular ambitions ; cared supremely to go to the front, and be felt by the men of his generation ; to speak to senates, to mould the decrees of states. First of all, he had a holier ambition : to please his mother, to please his conscience, to please his God. Such a superstructure as he erected, so shapely, so symmetrical ; a character so well proportioned, so well balanced ; that grew nobler and nobler every year he lived ; ay, and had the same prospect of growth, and capacity for growth, the day of his untimely death, as a quarter of a century before ; such a superstructure as he erected was possible only by the careful laying of the broadest and deepest moral foundations. I find the first secret of his greatness in the fact that he was the son of such a mother ; and the second in the fact that he was the husband of such a wife.

A French writer in the Paris newspaper *Figaro*, has said this : " I always have kept the sons of widows separate from my general collection of portraits. They seem to me to be twice the woman's son ; for a particular sweetness of life is impressed upon them ; and however busy they may be, their characters show the work of the

gentler sex. A feminine hand has modeled such statues, before active life and great works have reproduced them in marble. Such is President Garfield; a colossal Yankee, as it were, with all the mild, yet vigorous qualities of a widow's son." That filial instinct which inspired our wounded President, torn with the assassin's bullet; cut with the surgeon's knives; and battling with such unequal odds for every breath of life he drew; to pen that immortal letter to his white-haired mother; that shielding care which he took of her; that proud recognition of his obligation to her, which he was always forward to acknowledge; as well as her pathetic utterances since his death, show us the closeness of the bond which united them. Happy son of such a mother! Happy mother of such a son! And I say, right here, in this home-life of this widow, with only the widow's God; and in that other home-life, which brought him wife and children; wife to be loved and leaned upon, as well to support; children to toy with and to educate, as well as feed and clothe; right here, in this home-life, sweetened by human love, and made sacred by love divine; he built himself down deep, he anchored himself to unshaken foundations. These were Christian households; and this man never did anything unworthy of them. Ay, his success was their success. Have you forgotten the proud day, when having taken the oath of office, he stood in presence of acclaiming throngs, the President of the greatest nation on earth; within a stone's throw of the scenes of his greatest forensic triumphs; in front of that magnificent structure, every echo of which knew his voice; he turned and kissed his mother and his wife, as if to give them their share in the honor; as if he would not enter upon his stupendous responsibilities,

without recognizing their title to accompany him? And how nobly, how grandly have they done it! Some people called it gush and sentiment. As well call the up-bursting fountain gush and sentiment. It was one of the primary secrets of the man's life. Read the dispatch which he caused to be sent from the White House to summon his wife to his bedside. He made the very lightning tender, in breaking to her the tale of his hurt, in telling the tale of his love.

President Garfield's honors came to him unsought. Nay, the time came when they were, as it were heaped upon him. They came like double peals of thunder. They came so fast that he was unable to keep up with them; to qualify for the latest before a new one was announced. While this messenger of the people was yet speaking, another messenger arrived. It would seem now as though these gifts were accelerated to meet the brief limits allotted him here on earth; his time was to be so short.

The greatness which this man achieved seems unlike that of many of our public men. It was rather grown into than struggled for. Life seemed to bring him honors and lay them at his feet. It was rather God's work than his own. Everywhere along his life there was a place which cried out for this man. His attainment of place seemed rather a natural process, like the growth of a tree, which puts out branch after branch, until her graceful outlines are all complete. Says President Chadbourne, of Williams College, "His course, since he entered active life, has seemed to move on in the same line in which he moved here." He did not take place as a storming-party takes a fortification, by straining every nerve, by bringing every influence to bear upon the sources from

which a place comes. Success seemed to fling open her golden portals at his approach. He stood up in a great Convention to advocate the claims of another. He became at once the cynosure of all eyes; he ravished all ears. Was it his fault that the people recognized him? He could not be true to another without being his own best self. It was nothing new. He had been thus recognized all his life long. That manly presence, that commanding intellect, those persuasive words, that great beating heart, that vibrating, sonorous voice, the whole bearing of the man proclaimed him what he was. There he stood, and the people took him. The hour of his supreme destiny was about to strike. He did not need to buy and sell. He did not need to pack conventions. He stood there for what he was, as God made him, and the people knew him. Cervantes has said that every man is "the son of his own works." He was the son of his own works. His nomination was an intuition; in an earthly sense it was an inspiration. It was foreordained; like the consummate bloom of the flower. Well might he turn as pale as death when he saw that tide turn; when, away from the eminent statesman of his own choice; away from the plumed knight, his brother-friend; away from the veteran of a hundred bloody fields, the world-honored American; away from other noble competitors, the heart of that Convention turned to him.

Jean Richter says in his *Titan* that "a man must have either great men or great objects before him, otherwise his powers degenerate; as the magnet's do when it has lain for a long time without being turned to the right corners of the world." This man's powers never degenerated. He was all the time using them. They were always feeling the electric currents of great objects. Like

the Hyblean bee, he was all the time gathering honey for some after mellifluous speech. He was reverent of good things by nature ; and to him all good things were great. He had no flippant flings at the simple religion of his mother ; but, leaning on his strong arm, as upon her beautiful staff, to the end, from the White House, as from the log cabin of Orange, they walked to the House of God in company. And when the assassin first sought him, he sought him where he knew he would be, in the sanctuary of God. He was reverent of that great man, still living, who answered his letter of inquiry as to a future College, "Come on, and we will do the best we can for you ;" and who was crowned when the people crowned his pupil. And he himself has said, that beyond all that he ever got through his eastern Alma Mater, from books, was the impression made upon his moral nature, by that greatest of all American teachers, who is so much more than even he can teach. And who can ever forget, how it was that fateful July morning ; how like a buoyant-hearted boy, he was turning aside from his great duties for one day of reunion, and the renewal of old College comradeship, when the assassin found him ?

It was fortunate for James Abram Garfield, that that night, when he lay wakeful, talking over his future studies with a young companion, they decided that he should go East. The descendant of New England ancestry : having enfolded within him hidden forces, which had their fountain head in those high-up hills of severe and pure life ; it was fitting, that the capital of this symmetrical column, which was to be built into the Temple of Freedom, side by side with a Washington and a Lincoln, should be carved and set in place by New England hands : that he, who from his boyhood had heard the language of the

great Lakes, should complete his studies, where he could listen to the hymn, which the Pilgrims heard, when they laid our first foundations.

This man, whom we honor, whom we mourn, to-day, was the united, the consummate product of the New England of the East, and the New England of the West. We cannot help it, "Westward the course of empire takes its way." "Time's noblest product is the last." Let it satisfy us, that the East lives again in the West. Henceforth our Websters and our Sumners must come from toward the setting sun. It used to be the complaint, that none of New England's, none of the country's greatest minds could be exalted to the Presidential chair; that while the chair of the Chief Executive, was, as it were, borne upon the shoulders of the noblest statesmen, North and South, East and West, not one of them could win a seat within it. And some of them have died broken-hearted because of this. Henceforth, this reproach is taken away. This man, not yet, fifty years of age; and our Washington died at sixty seven; our Webster, at sixty seven; Charles Sumner at sixty four and Henry Wilson at sixty three; this man, who had within him life-forces which would have carried him into the calm estuary of such a serene old age, as that where his reverend mother lies in her bereavement; whose expectation of life was founded, not alone upon the perfection of his physical proportions, where manly beauty and strength were so splendidly combined; his wholesome and temperate life; but upon his filial fulfillment of the first commandment with promise; upon his dwelling in the secret place of the Most High, his abiding under the shadow of the Almighty; for had not God said: Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord

thy God giveth thee? and with long life will I satisfy him? this man, moving along the groove of God's purposes; not precociously and prematurely, but like the movements of nature, first the blade, then the ear, then, the full corn in the ear; never craving for position; never jealous of friend, or ungenerous to foe; always thorough, always solid in his attainments; touching the mountain-tops of his career like some winged Mercury,

“New-lighted on a Heaven-kissing hill;”

until, dazzling and bewildering us, he disappears from mortal sight; takes all his glory and his honor, and lays them at the feet of Him on whose vesture and whose thigh is written King of kings and Lord of lords; this man, with a genius for all the highest intellectual processes; whose ordinary thoughts were as fresh as the morning dew, and as fragrant as the flower of spring-time; who had sat at the feet of the great thinkers in all departments of thought, and had gleaned something from all; who studied all subjects and mastered them all; who loved his party without being a partisan; who looked at great questions with a statesman's eye, and handled them as only a statesman could; and who, relative to the period of his life, and the promise of his powers, was but in the gristle, and only hardening into the bone of a wonderful manhood; this man did, yet, in the first decade of the second century of the nation's life, reach the highest place in the gift of the American people! There is no decadence of the nation here. If the sage of Marshfield died of a broken heart, that only commonplace men could sit in the Presidential seat, he is now avenged. We have had there the consummate flower of our best civilization; a man as good as he was great; as

great as he was good. And the people knew him, when they saw him, and always said, "Go up higher!"

Do you ask me why such a man was given to us, and then so rudely and cruelly taken from us; left to be stung to death by the fangs of the most vicious and poisonous reptile, that crawls in the rank growth of our worst civilization? why from the time his name was mentioned as a candidate for the high place, which he has just vacated by death—and his supreme fitness for which now seems so resplendent—he was followed by that tongue of slander, which outvenoms all the worms of the Nile?

"God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain."

Not for his own sake, you may be very sure. It was not for his own sake that he was so foully singled out; the kindest man by the vilest; that he battled so long to baffle the foul intent; that so long we watched at his bedside, and saw into the inmost chambers of that great soul, where still was the calm sunshine and the heroic will; that we counted the beat of that great heart, as it throbbed under the very ribs of death; that we followed him to Elberon, where the sea, as it broke on his ear, said to his quest for restoration, "It is not in me;" that he came back here dead; our very houses blasted with the black frost of death, so lately blooming with the colors of the free; that, at last, the funeral cortege bearing the dead President; bearing the widow and the fatherless, moved away westward, while the nation bowed in grief still waits for the last words to be said over his dust.

God only knows what passed between this Christian brother and Himself, from July 2d to September 19th. Sequestered by what seems to a Christian people, a

false, a pagan conception of the offices of the Christian religion, from the kindly presence of his own gentle and priestlike pastor ; while the nation was in prayer in his behalf, for those long, weary weeks, meeting only the same professional faces, however sympathetic, however kindly ; how he must have hungered for some single word of prayer, breathed up from the depths of a full heart ! God only knows, I say, what passed between this Christian brother and Himself. And all Christendom had a right to the testimony of this man dying. For when his poor, pitiable, befooled attendants told him that all was nearly over, it was, as Prince Henry said of dying King John :

“ It is too late ! The life of all his blood
 Is touched corruptibly, and his pure brain,
 Which some suppose the soul’s frail dwelling house,
 Doth by the idle comments that it makes,
 Foretell the ending of mortality.”

But what, meantime, has passed between our hearts and God ? The nation has spent days and weeks in prayer. She has wept and watched, and wept and watched again. For months God has fed us with the bread of tears ; and given us tears to drink in great measure. Has the affliction been borne as though God were dealing with us for our sins ? Has he forgiven us ? Will this stroke be enough ? However the deadly missile was winged ; by what malice and mad purpose, we must still say, “ It is the Lord ! ” He has taken away the mighty man, the man of war, the honorable man, the counsellor, the eloquent orator. He has put the government upon other shoulders ; strong and true, we believe, but still unaccustomed to the burden. This man, our President, our representative, has been smitten for us. It has been done by the Judge of all the earth. Do not

our relations to God need fresh adjustment? We made a covenant with Him, when in the furnace of civil war; when He seemed to walk with us as with the Hebrew youths. Has this covenant been kept? Has it been kept by the men in our highest places? It is a great thing to be a Christian nation. It is a dignity and an honor; but it implies obligations. If these obligations are not met, it implies perils. For we are still in God's hands. Are we meeting them? We have Christian convictions respecting Mormonism, respecting the Indians, respecting the traffic in spirituous liquors, respecting the Day of God. Are we true to them? Are we trying to put them into public sentiment? into laws and institutions?

It is indeed a great thing to feel, that though the hand at the wheel has been thus palsied in death, the ship of State does not stagger or swerve from her course, but moves majestically on; that the footsteps of God are in the seas before her. The Chief Executive dies; the government cannot die. It does not vest in any one man; be he ever so eminent, be he ever so beloved. It vests in constitutional law. It vests in the hearts of the people. The same authoritative voice which clothed Garfield with Presidential power, at the same time indicated his successor, and that successor is our President. We turn away from our Garfield dead; from the lips that had such music; from the brow that was so kingly; from the heart which beat so proudly and loved so well; from the form that had such action; not to forget him; not to forget his triumphal day, nor the day of dirges and woe. We will read the strange pages of his life to our children; we will write his maxims in our memory; his form shall stand in stone and in bronze, so long as the Republic

shall endure. If he has made mistakes, as who of our greatest have not? have we not forgiven them? let us remember that his hand was scarcely familiar with the helm of State; that he was yet in the narrows of his administration; and that his greatest mistake must always have sprung from a great and loving heart, that feared no ill because it meant none. Sometime all men will say of him, "A man more sinned against than sinning."

These are his own words; with them let us draw near to the end: "Individuals may wear, for a time, the glory of our institutions; but they carry it not to the grave with them. Like rain drops from Heaven, they may pass through the circle of the shining bow and add to its lustre. But when they have sank in the earth again, the proud arch still spans the sky, and shines gloriously on." Yes, but as the rain-drops are gathered back into the clouds, and return to shine in God's bow of promise again, so the lives of a nation's great men are ever repeating themselves in the generations to come; and God gives once, but to give again; changing the individual, but repeating the type, till time shall be no more! And so it shall be with him. This shall be his function, too.

We turn away from our Garfield dead; for God has taken him to other spheres, to other administration. For is it not written, "His servants shall serve Him?" But in taking one He has given us another. The man whom the people named second, God has now named first. Are there not last that shall be first? We turn from what might have been, to what is and what is to be. No unlineal hand takes the sceptre; but a man of character and purpose true and tried; a man who has walked in the shadow of our great eclipse, with a pathetic discreetness, which has won all hearts; and whose first official

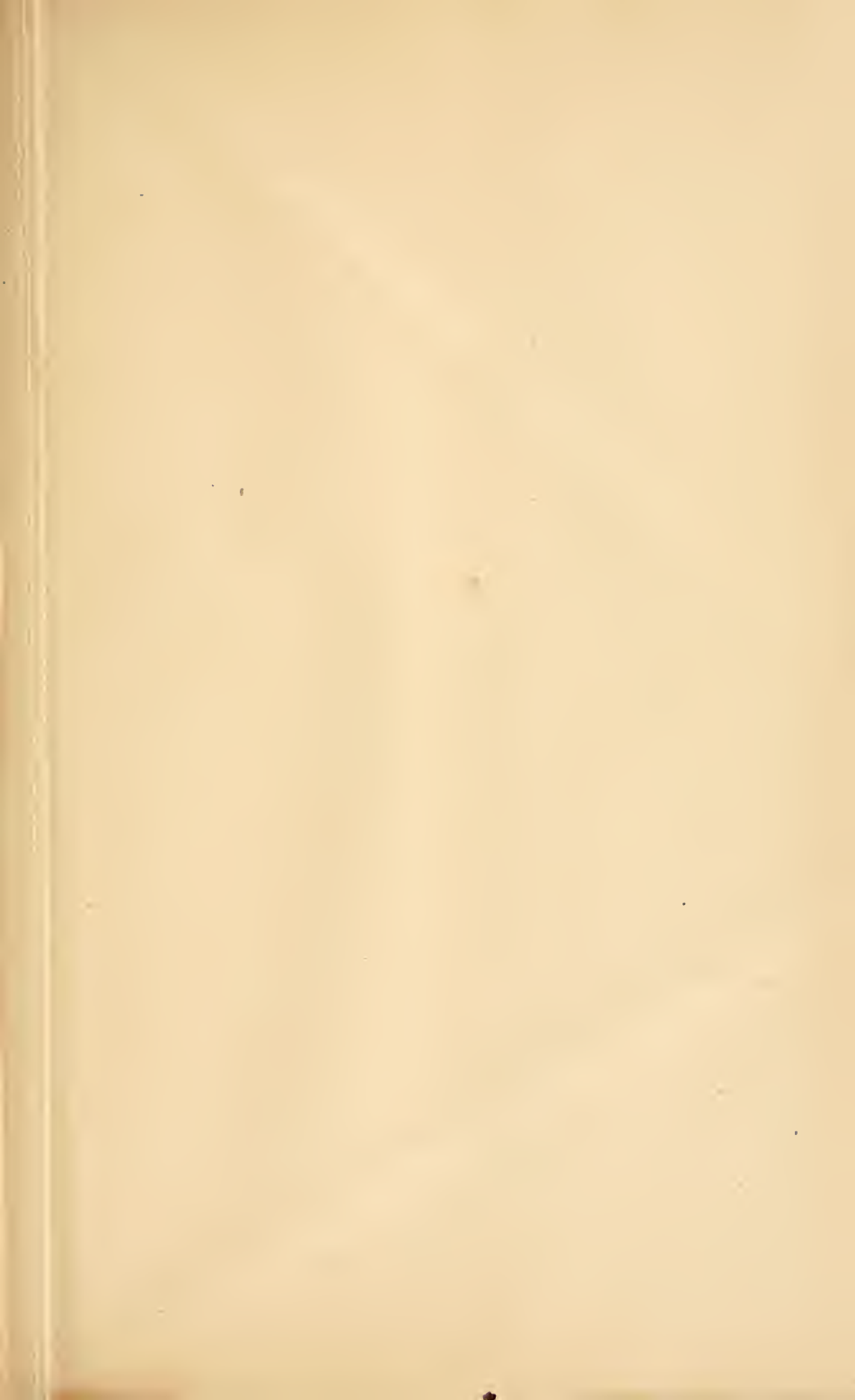
acts and utterances give assurance that with these unsought responsibilities has come to him peculiar grace from God. If he has made his mistakes, we bury them in that still open grave of his predecessor. May we not close with the lines, which the Poet Tennyson, himself a mourner over our dead Garfield, puts into the lips of the dying King Arthur ; with the few last lines of the poem ?

“The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
 And God fulfills himself in many ways,
 Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
 Comfort thyself. What comfort is in me ?
 I have lived my life, and that which I have done,
 May He, within Himself, make pure ! but then,
 If thou shouldst never see my face again,
 Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer,
 Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
 Rise like a fountain for me, night and day.
 For what are men better than sheep or goats,
 That nourish a blind life within the brain,
 If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
 Both for themselves, and those who call them friend ?
 For so, the round world is every way
 Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.”
 * * * * *

And so to bed : where yet in sleep I seemed
 To sail with Arthur under looming shores,
 Point after point : till on to dawn, when dreams
 Begin to feel the touch and stir of day,
 To me, methought, who waited with a crowd,
 There came a barque, that blowing forward, bore
 King Arthur like a modern gentleman
 Of stateliest port : and all the people cried,
 ‘Arthur is come again ; he cannot die.’
 Then those that stood upon the hills behind,
 Repeated, ‘Come again, and thrice as fair !’
 And further inland voices echoed, ‘Come
 With all good things !’ ”

We pray not for the dead, but for the living. And when this nation awakens from her grief, may she find the poet’s parable true. Then shall be fulfilled the prophecy : “Thou shall no more be termed Forsaken !

Neither shall thy land be termed any more Desolate !
But thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah !
For the Lord delighteth in Thee."







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